



Build your own bat house

Attract bug-catchers

Wyoming's Little Brown Bat is a very helpful creature to have around. They can catch 600 moths in an hour and thousands of mosquitoes in a single night! Little brown bats roost in between the bark and trunk of trees, however you can promote these natural bug-catchers living around your home by building them a custom bat house where they can roost and raise their young. This bat house mimics space between bark where they like to roost and raise their young. The metal mesh is there to make a rough surface for bats to climb and caulk is added to keep it warm inside. It's painted dark colors (only on the outside) to absorb heat, too.

Steps

Step 1: Paint only the outside faces of the plywood and pine board with dark stain or paint and let it dry. This will also help the house retain heat to keep the bats warm.

Step 2: Place the metal mesh onto the largest piece of plywood, and affix the three pine boards onto the plywood with screws, sandwiching the mesh in between. Be sure to put caulk between the pine and plywood before affixing it to seal any openings from the wind. The mesh provides a rough surface for the bats to grab onto and climb around inside their new house with.

Step 3: Put some caulk onto the top side of the pine boards, and affix the other two pieces of plywood onto them, being sure to leave a $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap between the larger piece of plywood that goes above the smaller piece below. (See the image to clarify the assembly.)

Step 4: Mount your finished bat house in a spot that's sunny, ideally 10-15 feet off the ground to protect your bats from predators. The side of a house or a post work well! If your sunny spot is close to a water source for the bats to drink, that's a plus!

Step 5: Wait for some little brown bats to move in and start zipping around and snagging up bugs at night.

What you will need

To start off, you'll want to keep safety in mind at all times when building your own bat house. Kids can help screw, glue, and paint, but let adults do the wood cutting.

Materials

- $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch plywood:
 - 24x20-inch piece
 - 24x2-inch piece
 - 24x26-inch piece
- 1x2-inch pine board (which actually measures $\frac{3}{4}$ x1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch)
 - two 21-inch pieces
 - 24-inch piece
- Caulk
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch screws
- Dark colored stain or paint
- Metal mesh
 - 26"x24" piece

